

wary of Mr. Wilson's credibility. He's the one who told the press the truth that Mr. Wilson had been recommended for the CIA consulting gig by his wife, not by Vice President Dick Cheney as Mr. Wilson was asserting on the airwaves. In short, Mr. Rove provided important background so Americans could understand that Mr. Wilson wasn't a whistleblower but was a partisan trying to discredit the Iraq War in an election campaign. Thank you, Mr. Rove.

Media chants aside, there's no evidence that Mr. Rove broke any laws in telling reporters that Ms. Plame may have played a role in her husband's selection for a 2002 mission to investigate reports that Iraq was seeking uranium ore in Niger. To be prosecuted under the 1982 Intelligence Identities Protection Act, Mr. Rove would have to have deliberately and maliciously exposed Ms. Plame knowing that she was an undercover agent and using information he'd obtained in an official capacity. But it appears Mr. Rove didn't even know Ms. Plame's name and had only heard about her work at Langley from other journalists.

On the "no underlying crime" point, moreover, no less than the New York Times and Washington Post now agree. So do the 36 major news organizations that filed a legal brief in March aimed at keeping Mr. Cooper and the New York Times's Judith Miller out of jail.

"While an investigation of the leak was justified, it is far from clear—at least on the public record—that a crime took place," the Post noted the other day. Granted the media have come a bit late to this understanding, and then only to protect their own, but the logic of their argument is that Mr. Rove did nothing wrong either.

The same can't be said for Mr. Wilson, who first "outed" himself as a CIA consultant in a melodramatic New York Times op-ed in July 2003. At the time he claimed to have thoroughly debunked the Iraq-Niger yellowcake uranium connection that President Bush had mentioned in his now famous "16 words" on the subject in that year's State of the Union address.

Mr. Wilson also vehemently denied it when columnist Robert Novak first reported that his wife had played a role in selecting him for the Niger mission. He promptly signed up as adviser to the Kerry campaign and was feted almost everywhere in the media, including repeat appearances on NBC's "Meet the Press" and a photo spread (with Valerie) in *Vanity Fair*.

But his day in the political sun was short-lived. The bipartisan Senate Intelligence Committee report last July cited the note that Ms. Plame had sent recommending her husband for the Niger mission. "Interviews and documents provided to the Committee indicate that his wife, a CPD [Counterproliferation Division] employee, suggested his name for the trip," said the report.

The same bipartisan report also pointed out that the forged documents Mr. Wilson claimed to have discredited hadn't even entered intelligence channels until eight months after his trip. And it said the CIA interpreted the information he provided in his debrief as mildly supportive of the suspicion that Iraq had been seeking uranium in Niger.

About the same time, another inquiry headed by Britain's Lord Butler delivered its own verdict on the 16 words: "We conclude also that the statement in President Bush's State of the Union Address of 28 January 2003 that 'The British Government has learned that Saddam Hussein recently sought significant quantities of uranium from Africa' was well-founded."

In short, Joe Wilson hadn't told the truth about what he'd discovered in Africa, how

he'd discovered it, what he'd told the CIA about it, or even why he was sent on the mission. The media and the Kerry campaign promptly abandoned him, though the former never did give as much prominence to his debunking as they did to his original accusations. But if anyone can remember another public figure so entirely and thoroughly discredited, let us know.

If there's any scandal at all here, it is that this entire episode has been allowed to waste so much government time and media attention, not to mention inspire a "special counsel" probe. The Bush Administration is also guilty on this count, since it went along with the appointment of prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald in an election year in order to punt the issue down the road. But now Mr. Fitzgerald has become an unguided missile, holding reporters in contempt for not disclosing their sources even as it becomes clearer all the time that no underlying crime was at issue.

As for the press corps, rather than calling for Mr. Rove to be fired, they ought to be grateful to him for telling the truth.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. DENT). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

RULING BY JUDGE YOUNG

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, most of my colleagues and the people of this country are not aware that the shoe bomber that was on the plane that was going to blow up that plane and kill all those innocent people was recently convicted and sentenced. People across this country did not see on television the judge's decision or hear what the judge said, so I want to read to the American people and my colleagues part of what Judge William Young said in that decision in putting that man in jail for two or three life sentences.

He said, We are not afraid of you or your terrorist conspirators, Mr. Reid. We are Americans. We have been through the fire before. You are not an enemy combatant, you are a terrorist. You are not a soldier in any war. You are a terrorist. To give you that reference to call you a soldier gives you far too much stature.

Whether it is the officers of government who do it or your attorney who does it, or if you think you are a soldier, you are not. You are a terrorist, and we do not negotiate with terrorists. We do not meet with terrorists.

We do not sign documents with terrorists. We hunt them down one by one and bring them to justice, so war talk is way out of line in this court. You are a big fellow, but are not that big. You are no warrior, I have known warriors. You are a terrorist, a species of criminal that is guilty of multiple attempted murders.

In a very real sense, State Trooper Santiago had it right when he first took you off the plane and into custody and you wondered where the press and TV were, and he said, You are no big deal. You are no big deal. What your able counsel and what the equally able United States attorneys have grappled with, and what I have as honesty as I know how, have tried to grapple with is why you did something so horrific. What was it that led you to this courtroom today?

I have listened respectfully to what you have had to say, and I ask you to search your heart and ask yourself what sort of unfathomable hate led you to do what you are guilty of doing and what you admitted you were doing. And I have an answer for you. It may not satisfy you, but as I search this entire record, it comes as close to understanding as I know. It seems to me that you hate the one thing that to us is most precious. You hate our freedom. Our individual freedom. Our individual freedom to live as we choose, to come and go as we choose, to believe or not believe as we individually choose.

Here in this society, the very wind carries freedom. It carries it everywhere from sea to shining sea. It is because we prize individual freedom so much that you are here today in this beautiful courtroom so that everyone can see, can truly see that justice is administered fairly, individually, and discretely.

It is for freedom's sake that your lawyers are striving so vigorously on your behalf and have filed appeals, will go on in their representation of you before other judges.

We as Americans are all about freedom. Because we all know the way we treat you, Mr. Reid, is the measure of our own liberties. Make no mistake though. It is yet true that we will bear any burden, pay any price to preserve our freedoms. Look around this courtroom and mark it well. The world is not going to long remember what you or I say here today. The day after tomorrow, it will be forgotten. But this, however, will long endure.

Here in this courtroom and courtrooms all across America, the American people will gather to see justice, individual justice, justice, not war, individual justice is, in fact, being done.

The very President of the United States, through his officers, will have to come into courtrooms and lay out evidence on which specific matters can be judged and juries of citizens will gather to sit and judge that evidence democratically, to mold and shape and refine our sense of justice.